the Public Distribution system noticed *inter alia* that the off-take of foodgrains under the BPL category in these districts was unsatisfactory. The State Government has been advised to look into this on priority and take requisite steps to increase the off-take in the KBK districts.

Distress Sale of paddy in Orissa

447. SHRI B.J. PANDA:
MS. PRAMILA BOHIDAR:

Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the distress sale of paddy by poor farmers of Orissa;

(b) whether to control distress sale by farmers, the Centre has implemented "Rural Warehouses Schemes" (RWS);

(c) if so, the details of this project and how far this has helped the beleaguered farmers;

(d) the details of "Farmers Expansion Service Scheme" (FESS) project and how far this has helped the farmers of the State;

(e) whether the Centre has provided some compensation to those farmers who were compelled to distress sale of paddy;

(f) if so, the details thereof; and

(g) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI SUBHASH MAHARIA): (a) No report of distress sale of paddy, conforming to Fair Average Quality (FAQ) specifications, have been received by this Department from Orissa during the current Kharif Marketing Season 2002-03.

(b) and (c) Grameen Bhandaran Yojana, a Central Sector Scheme of Capital Investment Subsidy for construction/renovation/expansion of

Rural Godowns is being implemented through National Bank of Agriculture & Rural Development (NABARD) and National Cooperative Development Corporation (NCDC). Under the Yojana, NABARD has sanctioned 995 projects with a total capacity of 59.29 lakh tonnes and NCDC has sanctioned 1575 projects with a capacity of 7.42 lakh tonnes as on 31.3.2003. Rural Godowns constructed under the Yojana will provide the farming community with the facility for scientific storage and enable it to avail pledge loan to meet its credit requirement without being compelled to sell the produce at a time when prices are low.

(d) As the Farmer Expansion Service Scheme (FESS) project is not under implementation by the Department of Agriculture and cooperation or the Department of Food and Public Distribution, the details of the same are not available.

(e) to (g) In order to reduce the hardship of farmers and to avoid distress sale of paddy, the specifications for procurement of paddy in Orissa have since been relaxed by the Government of India with effect from 11.6.2003 during the current Kharif Marketing Season. The FCI has also opened 20 centres in the State for procurement of paddy and has so far procured 497 tonnes of paddy.

Foodgrain for drought affected States

448. SHRI R. KAMARAJ: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have received any request from the drought affected States for supply of foodgrains from the Central Pool; and

(b) If so, the quantity of foodgrains allotted by the Centre to the States which are severely affected by the drought?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI SUBHASH MAHARIA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) A statement showing the allocation of foodgrains made to the drought affected States is annexed.